



*Serving With Pride The
Township of Manalapan
and the
Borough of Englishtown*

John J. Marciante, Jr., Ph.D.

Superintendent of Schools

Peter M. Friedman Building

54 Main Street

Englishtown, NJ 07726-1329

(732) 786-2500

(732) 786-2542 FAX

jmarciante@mersnj.us

August 5, 2020

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Last week, Governor Murphy announced a change in the guidance for reopening schools. He stated that it would be mandatory for students to wear masks for the entire school day. While additional guidance was promised, one thing is clear, Governor Murphy has not sat in a classroom in a non-air conditioned school during September for any extended period of time. As I stated in my presentation last week, it is unreasonable to expect that any child would be able to wear a mask in an 85 degree classroom for a four hour period. I will not include that in the plan for the reopening of the Manalapan-Englishtown Regional Schools as a requirement.

Tomorrow night I will present to the Board of Education the following modification to our reopening plan: All students in the A/B Hybrid schedule for second grade through fifth grade will be following the Virtual Academy schedule for the month of September. This impacts the following schools: Clark Mills School, Lafayette Mills School, Taylor Mills School, and Milford Brook School. All sixth grade students at Pine Brook School will also follow the Virtual Academy schedule for the month of September. Students at Wemrock Brook School, MEMS and the ELC will continue to follow the schedules outlined in the Reopening Plan. On October 1st a decision will be made regarding the non-air conditioned schools. It is my expectation that those students will return to in-person instruction in the A/B Hybrid format with masks mandated by October 15th.

Due to the importance of early education to the development of reading skills and its impact on future academic success, all kindergarten and first grade students will continue to receive in-person instruction as defined in the Reopening Plan. While masks will be mandatory as per Governor Murphy's order, current air-conditioned classrooms will be used to house these programs in Clark Mills School, Lafayette Mills School, Taylor Mills School and Milford Brook School.

From all the emails I have received, it is clear to me that many parents do not want to have their children wearing a mask for four straight hours. I recognize that this will impact some decisions previously made regarding choosing the A/B Hybrid Model or 100% Virtual Academy. Due to this significant change by the governor, if you want to change your decision and switch to the 100% Virtual Academy, you will need to email your principal and make that request. We will take care of making the change for you.

I know many of you will not agree with this decision. I have been in those classes in September. I can not put a plan into place that requires a child to sit in a classroom under those conditions. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact my office.

Sincerely,

John J. Marciante, Jr., Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools